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***Congressman Carnahan Authored Language to Provide
Equal Access for all Higher Education Study Abroad Programs***

(WASHINGTON) - Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) voted today in favor of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act to rebuild the capacity of the Department of State as well as fulfill its core diplomatic mission in achieving U.S. national security goals.

President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have made rebuilding America's image abroad a top priority of his administration. Congressman Carnahan, as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Vice-Chairman of the International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight Subcommittee, has also been an outspoken leader advocating for a more robust foreign policy to engage both our allies and adversaries as well as rebuilding America's reputation abroad.

"As the President calls for renewed attention to our global standing it is important Congress address the current 'diplomacy gap' we are experiencing," said Congressman Carnahan. "The State Department needs the ability to hire the most-qualified new Foreign Service Officers to help share the goals of the U.S. with the rest of the world."

The Authorization gives the Secretary of State the authority to hire more than 1,500 additional entry-level Foreign Services Officers to deal with current staffing shortfalls and new diplomatic challenges. To meet the challenge of overhauling U.S. diplomatic capabilities, it gives the Secretary the ability to tap the best talent available for short-term assignments to mentor new recruits.

It also establishes the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation as a new executive branch Corporation to raise funds; award grants; and work with Institutions of Higher Education to dramatically expand the number of U.S. students studying abroad.

"Having studied overseas during undergraduate studies, I am pleased with the efforts to expand the number of students studying abroad," said Carnahan. "American students who live and study in other countries not only gain invaluable experience, but they serve as some of America's best ambassadors."

Congressman Carnahan successfully authored language for new and existing study abroad programs to be on a level playing field when competing for grants to expand their existing study abroad programs. Institutions like St. Louis University, University of Missouri, Washington University and Webster University already have strong study abroad programs that could be eligible for funding. The legislation will also strengthen opportunities for youth abroad by

doubling the number of Peace Corps volunteers.

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